

Press Releases: Eight-year Anniversary of the Detention of 2009 Iranian Political Opponents

Press Statement
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This week marks the eight-year anniversary of the detention of 2009 Iranian presidential election candidates Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi, as well as Mousavi's wife and women's rights advocate Zahra Rahnavard. We condemn the continued house arrest of these three individuals, which contradicts Iran's own laws and its international obligations, including those under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to provide minimum fair trial guarantees and not to subject individuals to arbitrary arrest or detention.

As Iran marks the 40th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, it is an opportunity for the world once again to reflect on the regime's refusal to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Iranians. In addition to Karroubi, Mousavi, and Rahnavard, the Iranian regime continues to imprison hundreds of its people for political reasons. In fact, this past year was called Iran's "year of shame" due to the regime's ongoing ruthless crackdowns on the individuals living inside its borders. The regime arrested at least 7,000 peaceful protesters and held them in the country's notorious prisons. The victims of the regime's abuses include farmers, journalists, members of ethnic and religious minorities like Ahwazis and Gonabadi Sufis, teachers, truckers, environmentalists, students, and women demanding to choose what they wear. At least 26 protesters lost their lives, some under suspicious circumstances while held in custody.

Iranians must be able to live without fear of arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of fair trial guarantees, or even losing their lives for exercising their basic human rights. We condemn the continued arbitrary detention of the 2009 election candidates, along with those hundreds of other individuals being held arbitrarily or without fair public trials across the country. We demand their immediate release and the release of all prisoners of conscience.

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